

## Equinor Canada Ltd. Fisheries Communications Plan for Exploration Activities

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## 1 Objective, target group and provision

The Fisheries Communications Plan outlines how Equinor Canada Ltd. (the “Company”) will communicate with commercial fishers during exploration activities and during spill incidents.

The target group for this plan are personnel engaged in supporting Equinor Canada Ltd. exploration activities offshore Newfoundland and Labrador (NL).

This document is provided for in Equinor governing document [FR11-Sustainability](#).

## 2 Introduction

Equinor Canada Ltd. (Equinor) holds exploration licences (ELs) and Significant Discovery Licences (SDLs) in the NL offshore area. An environmental assessment (EA) was completed in 2018 for exploration drilling [1] with a subsequent decision on the EA from the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) in 2019 [2] (herein referred to as “Decision Statement”). In its exploration drilling EA, Equinor committed to developing and implementing a Fisheries Communication Plan. Furthermore, Condition 5.1 of the Decision Statement states:

Condition 5.1: The Proponent shall develop and implement a Fisheries Communication Plan in consultation with the Board, Indigenous groups and commercial fishers. The Proponent shall develop the Fisheries Communication Plan prior to drilling and implement it for the duration of the drilling program. The Proponent shall include in the Fisheries Communications Plan:

- 5.1.1 - procedures to notify Indigenous groups and commercial fishers of planned drilling activity, a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of drilling of each well;
- 5.1.2 - procedures to determine the requirement for a Fisheries Liaison Officer and/or fisheries guide vessel during drilling installation movement and geophysical programs;
- 5.1.3 - procedures to communicate with Indigenous groups and commercial fishers, in the event of an accident or malfunction, the results of the monitoring and any associated potential health risks referred to in condition 6.9; and
- 5.1.4 - the type of information that will be communicated to Indigenous groups and commercial fishers, and the timing of distribution of this information, that will include but not be limited to:
  - 5.1.4.1 - a description of planned Designated Project activities;
  - 5.1.4.2 - location(s) of safety exclusion zones;
  - 5.1.4.3 - anticipated vessel traffic schedule;
  - 5.1.4.4 - anticipated vessel routes; and
  - 5.1.4.5 - locations of suspended or abandoned wellheads.

### 2.1 Scope

This Fisheries Communication Plan addresses the information requirements listed in Condition 5.1 of the Decision Statement. It is applicable to all exploration activity carried out by Equinor in the NL offshore area within the scope of the Flemish Pass EA (see Figure ##).

The Plan outlines communication protocols and processes leading up to and during the operational period of the exploration drilling programs and, how communication would take place in the event of an emergency (accident, malfunction or unauthorized hydrocarbon spill). Note, that this plan complements Equinor Canada Ltd. Indigenous Fisheries Communication Plan for Exploration Activities.

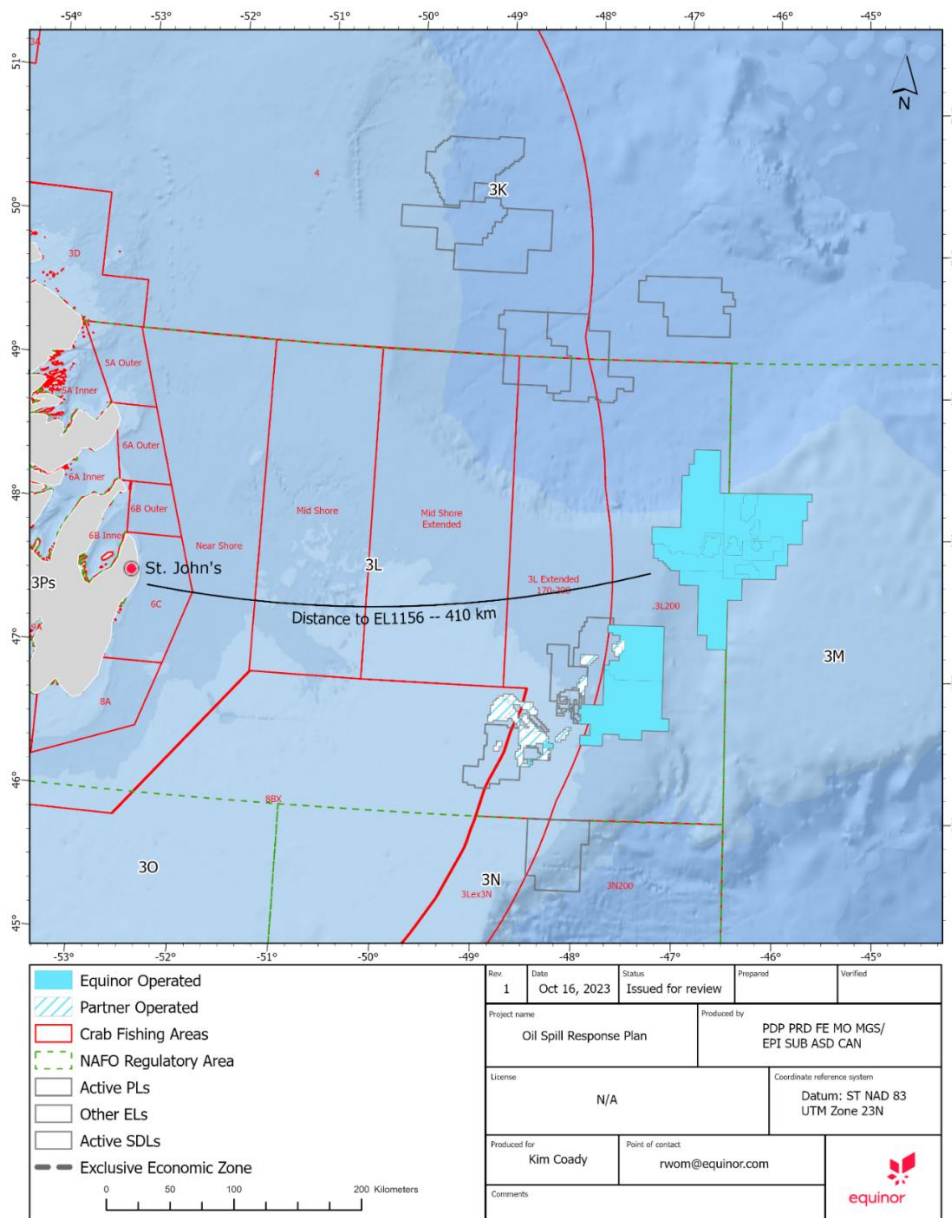


Figure 2-1 Equinor Canada Licences Offshore Newfoundland and Labrador in Relation to NAFO Unit Areas

### 3 Commercial Fisheries

For all its operations in the NL offshore, Equinor regularly engages with the fishing industry to keep them apprised of upcoming or ongoing offshore activities. Regular engagement is key to developing and maintaining information exchange between the two industries.

The commercial fishing industry in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador includes the Fish Food and Allied Workers-Unifor (FFAW-Unifor), Ocean Choice International (OCI), Atlantic Groundfish Council (AGC) and the Association of Seafood Producers (ASP). One Ocean is the liaison organization established by and for the fishing and petroleum industries of Newfoundland and Labrador. Its objective is to assist the fishing and petroleum industries in understanding each sector’s operational activities. Members of the One Ocean Board and working groups include representatives from these fishing entities and offshore oil and gas operators.

The fishing industry is a key stakeholder for Equinor’s offshore activities. On-going Project planning and implementation will continue to emphasize communication with the fisheries groups to address the

potential for interactions with commercial fishing activity within and near Equinor operational areas. For administrative purposes, the Northwest Atlantic is divided into a series of North Atlantic Fisheries Organizations (NAFO) Divisions, subdivisions and unit areas (Figure 2-1). Although fish harvesting activities and fisheries management responsibilities extend across these boundaries, they are generally used to regulate and manage fishing activity. Equinor's current licences overlap with NAFO Division 3L and 3M. (refer to Figure 2-1, above).

## 4 Communication Protocol with Commercial Fisheries Groups

### 4.1 Communication Protocols during Regular Operations

The following applies to exploration activities undertaken by Equinor Canada including exploration drilling and vessel-based surveys (e.g., geophysical, geotechnical, environmental). Note, not all of the communication items will apply, in particular, to vessel-based surveys (e.g., safety zone) and will be noted below.

Beginning at a minimum of two months prior to planned exploration operations (e.g., exploration drilling or vessel-based surveys), two weeks prior to the commencement of operations, and throughout exploration operations, Equinor will provide commercial fisheries contacts with email updates on operational activities (see list below). The operational updates will be sent to the main contact(s) provided by the various fishery groups and will include the information as described below. The identified group contact will be provided by One Ocean as outlined in "One Ocean Communication Protocol for Exploratory Drilling Projects in the Newfoundland and Labrador Protocol" [3]. Equinor will provide the contact information for the primary contact responsible for communications during exploration activities. The identified fisheries group representative will be responsible for any further dissemination of the information within their organisations.

Equinor will provide monthly (or sooner if the information is time sensitive) email operational updates with the following information:

1. Mobilization of the rig; including planned traffic routes (not applicable to vessel-based surveys) .
2. Name and photos of the drilling unit (MODU or ship) or vessel engaged in vessel-based survey
3. An assessment for requirement for a Fisheries Liaison Officer and/or Fisheries Guide Vessel (for exploration drilling programs or 3D/4D geophysical survey programs)
4. Supply vessel transit route (exploration drilling only);
5. Rig location (coordinates)/map of area; vessel survey area (coordinates/map of area)
6. Safety zone – description, location and purpose (exploration drilling only);
7. Supply and safety vessels - identification/call signs/routes (survey vessel identification will be supplied)
8. Anticipated vessel traffic schedule;
9. Commencement of exploration drilling (spud)(two weeks in advance) (exploration drilling only);
10. Schedule of drilling activities (e.g. blowout preventer installation, well testing, vertical seismic profiling program, etc.); planned timeframe of vessel-based survey
11. Abandonment of well (exploration drilling only)
12. Demobilization/rig movement; end of vessel-based survey program
13. Two-week notice post completion of exploration program (exploration drilling or vessel-based survey
14. Notification of posting to external website the results of any monitoring or follow-up programs (e.g. results of monitoring programs related to birds, marine mammals, fish and fish habitat) including links to documents and reports (e.g. C-NLOPB website, company websites).
15. Company contact.

Operational details will also be provided to marine communications and traffic services for broadcasting and publishing in the National Navigational Warning (NAVWARN) of the NAFO Secretariat and to the Canadian Hydrographic Services for future nautical charts and planning. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will also be notified prior to project commencement to avoid any potential conflict with any research surveys being completed in the drilling areas.

## 4.2 Communication Protocol in the Event of an Accident or Malfunction

In the case of an accident or malfunction that may result in adverse environmental effects, Equinor, according to its emergency response plan, will:

1. Within 48 hours of the incident or spill, notify by telephone, the representatives identified by interested Fishery groups
2. Following initial contact described in 1 above, Equinor will provide, via email, an emergency information update bulletin twice weekly in the initial phases of the incident, and then as operations and other activities resume, updates will be sent to representatives identified by interested fisher groups as new information becomes available.

The information to be included in the emergency information update bulletin (when available) will include the following:

1. Situational/event overview;
2. Map of area;
3. Location of event;
4. Timing of event;
5. Actions currently underway;
6. Any known restrictions or health, safety or environmental considerations;
7. Impacts to fisheries;
8. Results of monitoring programs;
9. Next scheduled update; and
10. Contact information for Company.

Communication protocols have also been outlined in the One Ocean Oil Spill Communication Protocol [4]. These protocols have been developed by One Ocean members to provide an agreed process in place to notify the fishing industry through One Ocean, of significant petroleum, hydrocarbon spill event directly, versus notification through the media. Direct communication will enable senior fishing industry representatives to inform their organizations that direct and ongoing communication has been made with the Operator and ensure factual information is disseminated within their organizations. This protocol will be actuated in the event of an oil spill incident that triggers the activation of Equinor's onshore emergency response centre.

Equinor will also report on an annual basis to the C-NLOPB on any known incidents of lost or damaged fishing gear attributed to the Project activities. This includes actual losses that might occur to harvesters and processors from damage to fishing gear and vessels as a result of interaction with Project vessels/debris outside the safety zone, or from oil spills originating within the Project area.

## 5 Utilisation of Fisheries Liaison Officer/Fisheries Guide Vessel

A Risk Management Matrix Guideline for the Utilization of Fisheries Liaison Observers (FLO) and Fisheries Guide Vessels (FGV) for the fishing and petroleum industries was developed by One Ocean (Figure 2.0) [5]. The One Ocean Matrix includes the provision of FLOs and offers considerations for the use of FGVs on a risk-based approach. FGVs may be deployed for transit and tow operations to support the operator scout vessel in monitoring and safeguarding fishing activity and gear. In consultation with the fishing industry, Equinor will utilize the Risk Management Matrix Guidelines to assess if and/or when a FLO and/or FGV will be used during the Project work scope. Depending on the timing of any movement of the drilling installation or 3D/4D geophysical programs there will need to be adequate time to develop contracts to support the use of FLOs and/or FGVs. The parties will keep in regular contact in advance of the prescribed two-week communication timeline to provide as much notice as possible to support logistical elements of mitigation efforts, if needed. The matrix can also be accessed through the following link <http://www.oneocean.ca/pdf/Matrix.pdf>.



## Risk Management Matrix Guidelines

for the utilization of Fisheries Liaison Officers and Fisheries Guide Vessels for the Fishing and Petroleum Industries of Newfoundland and Labrador

LEVEL OF FISHING ACTIVITY	SEISMIC OPERATIONS					TRANSIT-TOW OPERATIONS			
	VSP	EMS	WSS	2D	3D	Drill Ship	Drill Rig	FPSO	GBS
Fishery Closed in Area	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Fishery Open- No Recent Fishing in Area	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red
Fishery Open-Area Actively being Fished	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Red

	The Petroleum Industry Liaison at the Fish, Food and Allied Workers (FFAW) Union should be notified in advance of all seismic, transit and tow operations outside of the Field Safety Zone
	The use of a Fisheries Liaison Officer should be considered in consultation with the FFAW
	The use of a FLO and Fisheries Guide Vessel should be considered in consultation with the FFAW

**NOTES:**

- The Matrix provides useful criteria and considerations for mitigative and safe practices for the fishing and petroleum industries. The Matrix is a guideline for industry consultations and does not in any way replace them.
- The Matrix is designed for seismic, transit and tow operations located outside a field or exploration operation safety zone.
- Fisheries Guide Vessels will be commercially registered fishing vessels and part of the FFAW's Guide Vessel Program.
- Fishing activity referenced in the Matrix refers to fixed fishing gear/equipment only.
- Operators accept liability for compensation of any fisheries gear damage that is directly attributable to an operation.

**Acronyms:**

- 2D Two-Dimensional Seismic
- 3D Three-Dimensional Seismic
- EMS Electromagnetic Survey
- FPSO Floating Production Storage Offloading Vessel
- GBS Gravity Base Structure
- VSP Vertical Seismic Profiling
- WSS Well Site Survey

One Ocean was established in 2002 as the inter-industry liaison organization for the fishing and petroleum industries in Newfoundland and Labrador. Its mandate is to facilitate cooperation, communication and information exchange between the two marine sectors. The Risk Management Matrix Guidelines for the Utilization of Fisheries Liaison Officers and Fisheries Guide Vessels for the Fishing and Petroleum Industries in NL (Matrix) was developed by members of One Ocean. Its application should be developed in collaboration with industry, regulators and One Ocean. Contact One Ocean at 709 778 0511.

For more information on regulations please reference the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB) Geophysical, Geological Environmental and Geotechnical Program Guidelines 2008: <http://www.cnlopb.nl.ca/pdfs/guidelines/ggeopp.pdf> The C-NLOPB is the authority responsible for the administration of the regulations pertaining to all exploration for, and production of, hydrocarbons in the Newfoundland and Labrador offshore area.

Figure 5-1 One Ocean Risk Management Matrix Guidelines

## 6 Engagement with Fishing Community

As part of its on-going and planned exploration activities in the NL offshore area, Equinor continues to engage with the fishing industry. Through the regular One Ocean Industry Board and its working groups, information on ongoing and planned activities is provided. In addition, Equinor meets with the various fishing industry representatives in advance of planned activities, and as needed during regular operations. These engagements are logged in the Equinor tracking matrix, and are summarized in the required EA update, which is submitted to the C-NLOPB as part of the operations authorization process for exploration activities.

## 7 References

- [1] Statoil Canada, "Flemish Pass Exploration Drilling Program Environmental Impact Statement," 2018.
- [2] ECCC, "Decision Statement issued under Section 54 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2021 for the Flemish Pass Exploration Drilling Project," 2019.
- [3] One Ocean, "One Ocean Communication Protocol for Exploratory Drilling Projects in Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore," 2021.
- [4] One Ocean, "One Ocean Oil Spill Communication Protocol," 2020.
- [5] One Ocean, "One Ocean Risk Management Matrix Guidelines for the Utilization of Fisheries Liaison Officers and Fisheries Guide Vessels for the Fishing and Petroleum Industries of Newfoundland and Labrador".

